

**EXHIBITS TO  
STEVE CHON  
SENTENCING  
MEMORANDUM**

# INDEX OF EXHIBITS

Support Letter from Wing Chan.....	EXH. A
Support Letter from Yongseok Choi.....	EXH. B
Support Letter from Jennifer Chon.....	EXH. C
Support Letter from Jessica Chon.....	EXH. D
Support Letter from Judy Chon .....	EXH. E
Support Letter from Stephanie Chon .....	EXH. F
Support Letter from Jungmi Chun.....	EXH. G
Support Letter from Kenneth Cooke .....	EXH. H
Support Letter from Sam Han.....	EXH. I
Support Letter from Jude Hwang .....	EXH. J
Support Letter from Daehoo Jo .....	EXH. K
Support Letter from Kwang Kim.....	EXH. L
Support Letter from Hyuk Lee .....	EXH. M
Support Letter from Joshua Lee .....	EXH. N
Support Letter from June Ho Lee .....	EXH. O
Support Letter from Sam Lee.....	EXH. P
Support Letter from Jong Hwan No .....	EXH. Q
Support Letter from Kevin O'Donnell.....	EXH. R
Support Letter from Vincent Randazzo .....	EXH. S
Support Letter from Won Chul Yi .....	EXH. T
Declaration of Scott Hurr .....	EXH. U
<i>United States v. Hinderhofer</i> , No. Cr. 13-0262, Transcript of Sentencing Hearing (E.D.N.Y. Jan. 17, 2014) .....	EXH. V
Letter from Rocco A. Cavaliere .....	EXH. W

# EXHIBIT A

Wing Chan, P.E.

REDACTED

REDACTED

August 18, 2023

The Honorable Lashann DeArcy Hall  
United States District Judge  
Eastern District of New York  
225 Cadman Plaza East  
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Dear Judge DeArcy Hall:

My name is Wing Chan. I am a registered Professional Engineer in New York State. I was working for the US Army Corp of Engineers since 1975. In the late seventies, the Army initiated a major construction named: "The Fort Drum Expansion Program."

Fort Drum is an existing Army base located 75 miles north of Syracuse, NY. The base was used for Army Reserve Training. Due to the age of the base, most of the utilities and facilities were non-functional. Because of the location, it was suitable for mountain, snow, ground, desert and mountain combat training. The Army had budgeted \$2 Billion for the expansion program. This would include the construction of 200 new buildings to cover the following: sleeping barracks, administrative office building, mechanical repair shop, storage warehouse, cold storage warehouse, chapel, gymnasium, football and baseball field. It would also include a central heating plant, sewage treatment plant, water treatment plant, and 200 miles of new roadway. In addition, it would include a new electrical, sewer, and water system. There was also construction of a new military air field with supporting building and systems.

Upon completion of the program, the new modern Fort Drum would serve as the home and training center for the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division of the Army. The 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain is a light Infantry Brigade. They do not have heavy equipment but high-tech equipment. They can mobilize to anywhere in the world within 24 hours.

Before the construction project started, I volunteered to work in the program and was tasked to be the head of the technical support group. At that time, Steve Chon joined me. Steve and I were involved with the programing, design, and construction phases of the whole construction program. Steve, besides serving as a mechanical expert on the program, also helped resolve a lot of issues and problems during the design and construction phases.

Thanks to Steve's dedication and hard work, the construction was completed smoothly, on time, and within budget. Fort Drum was prepared to be able to support the Army in the "Desert Storm War". At the end of the construction program, Steve and I received a citation for the good work done, from the US Army Headquarters.

I came to believe Steve to be a hard-working, dedicated and honest worker from my working with him over the years. I believe Steve was a very great asset to the Army Corp of Engineers.

Respectfully yours,

Wing Chan, P.E.





# **EXHIBIT B**

Yongseok Choi

REDACTED

REDACTED

The Honorable LaShann DeArcy Hall  
United States District Judge  
Eastern District of New York  
225 Cadman Plaza East  
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Dear Judge DeArcy Hall:

My name is Yongseok Choi. I am president of Choi Design, an architectural/engineering business in Flushing, NY, that I have run since 2012.

I had worked for Steve Chon from 1998 to 2011 at Chon Engineering LLC. I graduated Pratt Institute, NY and started my architectural and engineering career at Chon Engineering, working for Mr. Chon. I have known him about 25 years. Except his own family, I can say I am the closest employee and know him very well regarding his personality and daily life like my father.

When I started my career at Chon Engineering, it was small architectural/engineering firm. Mr. Chon, as my boss, always came to the office early in the morning and stayed until late night to work with me. I also often used to go to NYC Buildings Department to discuss his jobs with plan examiners and building inspectors and he go with me. It was not easy for my boss, Mr. Chon, to do that with everything else he had to do, but he did that almost everyday just to train me with that respect.

He is very diligent and passionate with all his jobs even though many jobs at that time were small projects such as delis, laundromats, and small residential renovations.

I also learned from him how I had to deal with customers with the best attitude no matter what. One day he said to me, "This small deli project cost me about 2 thousand dollars, but for the owner of this project, this would be his first dream-come true project in his American life".

My boss knew the owner of that project had just come to the U.S as an immigrant. He insisted that this kind of small business project must be done well and completed in timely manner without delay because the owner needed to maintain his dream.

My first weekly paycheck at Chon Engineering in 1998 was \$400. Mr. Chon always made sure I was paid even though he used to not get his own paycheck since the company was very small.

His wife, Mrs. Chon also stayed and helped him in the office almost every day. Even though Mrs. Chon used to not to get her paycheck sometimes too, Mr. Chon always did not delay to give employees their paycheck including mine. He also always provided lunch to me and other employees with Mrs. Chon's help.

He never thought about "employees" and "boss". He treated me and other employees as a family. I learned from him in that manner, and it helped me a lot when I later ran a small business myself. I truly appreciated that I learned from him when I worked for him. Under Mr. Chon's leadership and how he treated his employees and customers, Chon Engineering developed and became bigger company.

When Chon Engineering invested and developed a huge project in 2007 for large Korean style Spa, I was a project manager. From the beginning of the idea to the construction of Spa building, I was engaged with all aspects with Mr. Chon. Since Spa project was really big in terms of construction itself and also financially, Mr. Chon and I had to work harder than ever at that time.

For financial issue, Mr. Chon and I contacted and met all possible bank people to get loan from them. Even after loan was settled with banks, the construction budget was still tight. In that matter, he work hard not to delay payment to the employees and contractors. He even worked himself with all employees and contractors at the job site every day and made all employees feel they part of team to follow him more efficiently.

Regarding tight budget problem, he even sell his personal assets to cover payment to all employees on time.

For long time, by looking at him, by helping him and by working together, Mr. Chon has always shown me his pride with passion for work and honesty to the employees. Personally, he has been my role model in my life as a boss and even as a human being.

He has devoted his talent to the community for long time. Through his business, he has helped many small business owners and residents to ensure their projects and dreams come true. Having witnessed him for long time and as a business owner in the community, I guarantee that Mr. Chon being present is a really important asset to Flushing, Queens, New York City, and United States of America.

Finally, please take my word and wish for him: His passion with honesty has been developed and devoted to the business of NY, and I hope he can continue to do so as he did before. Please let him get back to normal life with minimum punishment.

Thank you very much for reading.

Best Wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Yongseok Choi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name "Yongseok" is written in a more compact, rounded script, while the last name "Choi" is written in a more elongated, open script.

Yongseok Choi

# **EXHIBIT C**

Jennifer Chon  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

April 27, 2023

The Honorable Lashann DeArcy Hall  
United States District Judge  
Eastern District of New York  
225 Cadman Plaza East  
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Dear Judge DeArcy Hall,

Regardless of what the World will now say or think about my father, to me, he is honorable, hard working, trustworthy, and a trusting man whom I love and respect greatly.

My father grew up with great hardship financially and when it came to his family dynamic. Korea was a developing country while my father was a child. Rice and meat was not plentiful and was meant for special occasions. Indoor plumbing was few and far between so my parents grew up going to outhouses. My father came to this country with no money to his name. As the first born son in an Asian household, he had pressure to make something of himself and support his family. With that pressure he studied enough English and enrolled to get his engineering degree at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. And after meeting my mother and starting a family of his own, my father had even more pressure to raise his new family, searching for more opportunities than he was given or that came easily to him – he strived always to do better. After getting his mechanical engineering degree, my father got a government job in US Army Corps of Engineers. However, he couldn't make ends meet with only that job, so he worked two other jobs on the side, one as a security guard at a stationery store and the other as a shoe salesman. Usually, the times we would see my father was for a quick dinner every evening before he was rushing out to his second or third job. For over a decade my father got by with just a few hours' sleep every night. He was unable to provide what he thought was adequate for his family on a government salary even as he was promoted to a general mechanical engineer working on projects like Foley Square. Thoughts of how he could be an even better provider pushed him to start his own engineering firm. He borrowed money from friends and family to rent a small office space and started his firm with my mother as his secretary. I remember my mother working in the dark in order to save on electricity while my father was out of the office reaching out to whoever would hear him out trying to drum up business. Although it was a slow start, my father's business grew exponentially. My father's business grew through word of mouth and because he went above and beyond for his clients. He was the first Korean person in New York City who obtained all relevant licensing to build an infrastructure from start to finish. He would go to the building department many hours before it opened to be the first in line to get proper permitting approved. After some time, my father's business grew and he became solely responsible for building up almost all of the new properties in Flushing and Koreatown.

My father had to persevere through a lot of prejudice and resistance throughout the continuity of his career. Even before Spa Castle opened, Tony Avella, the city councilman at the time, was trying to block its opening because he assumed it was a sleazy Asian massage parlor and was going to bring shameful



behavior into the town. He organized a boycott during our grand opening and over the years, he did his best to try to shut Spa Castle down. The trust is Spa Castle is a family venue where parents and children can spend an enjoyable day, with spa services and water sports for the children, and is generally a wholesome place for Koreans to gather socially. Also, the New York Post spent many years trying to defame the business because we initially turned down an exclusive interview. When Premier 57, a spa in Manhattan was opening, we had so much push back from the next door Ritz Carlton residences. Even with so much backlash my father held his ground and did not get discouraged.

Unlike my other sisters, I have not worked with my father for very long but I still got to see how my father took responsibility for his employees and how he valued and takes care of them. Up until I joined the family business mid-last year, I was a pediatric dentist practicing in NYC, who couldn't be any more disconnected from personally getting to know my father as a boss. In the short time I have gotten to work with my father, I have gotten to see him as a type of boss I never had the experience of working for in my 10 years out in the workforce. While the construction of my father's new family spa, Balian Springs in Virginia, was still in the thick of things, I saw my father not only overseeing the construction, but also working alongside all the workers. My father does not sit above everyone giving orders and making decisions, instead, he stayed from start to finish of the day lifting, hammering, and sweating alongside the team. He bought the crew lunch every day and ate and conversed alongside them. On hot days, he would make sure there was extra waters and ice cream available for all and made sure people did not over exert themselves. There was a worker who had a stroke, not on the job site, but while he was working for my father. My father would take the time to visit him in the hospital and helped cover this man's expenses. I got to see a man who treated himself no different than the employees he hired and paid for. My father is a humble man and tireless worker who shows his appreciation for the people that work for him, including me.

My father is a deeply loyal and moral person and in being so, he is too trusting of people. He thinks everyone also lives by a strict moral code. His blind trust in people has gotten him to get cheated by friends, acquaintances, business partners, employees, and family members time and time again. As frustrating is it to me, I commend how forgiving he is. A former employee who worked for my father as the purchasing person for many years at Spa Castle got caught embezzling about 1 million dollars from the company. Another example of my father being taken advantage of is the general manager of my father's business for many years. This man had a gambling addiction that got out of hand so he ended up trying to extort money from my father to feed his addiction. After letting him go, we found out he was being inappropriate with female staff which ended up getting the company into legal trouble. His wife worked at a bank and tried to steal my father's identity to illegally borrow money using his name. Was my father aware these situations were happening at the time? No, because he trusted these individuals so much he believed they were handling themselves appropriately.

My father may not have been always physically present while I was growing up because he was working all the time but he was there for me as a dad in all the ways that mattered. He led by example on how to work hard, fight for what you want, be giving, and to treat others kindly. He gave me emotional and financial security to foster my independence and pursue my own dental career goals. And honestly, it isn't that my father wasn't present. He just might not have been present as much as most fathers because he worked so hard. As tired as he may have been, he made time for his kids when he could. I have many lasting memories of my childhood because my father would video record us during those times. My dad would take us on his business trips while he was working for the government so we have footage of us stopping in Maine to eat lobsters, taking the ferry to see the Niagara Falls, splashing around in the hotel pools. On the weekends, he would take us to the playground and film us on the

swing, buy us Italian ices, and encourage singing my made up songs. Every now and then when my mother had to help my uncle at his candy store in the evening, my dad would microwave frozen shumai for us and I will forever think of my dad whenever I see shumai. My father has taken so much energy to do the right thing, give my family a good life, and set the right example for my sisters and I. If my father did anything wrong, I know for fact that he has learned from it and will never do something unlawful again.

Your Honor please show my father compassion. His heart is truly well-meaning and it is unfortunate that his amazing qualities and trust contributed to why he has had such a negative turn of events. Please don't sentence my father to prison. He won't be able to keep providing the daily bread for his employees and I am very concerned that the business cannot keep going without my father. As I have witnessed and experienced, he is involved in overseeing every part of the business. He is also the person that vendors and other businesses trust and agree to do business with. There is no one who can replace my father. There's no one we can hire who can know every part of the whole business like my father and also deal with vendors who rely on my father. Please let my father continue to support the families of his hundreds of employees and continue with his other good works.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jennifer Chon', with a stylized, flowing script.

Jennifer Chon



# **EXHIBIT D**

Jessica Chon

REDACTED

REDACTED

May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023

The Honorable Lashann DeArcy Hall  
United States District Judge  
Eastern District of New York  
225 Cadman Plaza East  
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Dear Judge DeArcy Hall:

My name is Jessica Chon. I am 25 years old and am Steve Chon's youngest daughter.

When reflecting upon my relationship with my father, I would say my childhood followed the stereotypical "Asian immigrant parent" trope. When I was growing up, my father was nearly always working to provide for me, my sisters, and mother. As I've gotten older, I've only grown to appreciate his efforts for our family and have understood more how he had to sacrifice his time in order to give us not only a more comfortable life, but also opportunities he never had and wanted us to experience. Looking back, I also realize there were many instances of him trying to express his love for us. A particularly fond memory I have was when my father gave me a telescope for my 12<sup>th</sup> birthday. At the time, I was confused by the random gift and asked my sister why our dad bought me a telescope. She told me that he wanted to help me see the stars better since I was so interested in looking at them. My father did not know that a month prior, I was given a school assignment to observe and document constellations for a month, but he knew that I was outside staring at the sky each night. Now, every time I walk past the telescope, I am reminded that my father cares deeply for his family and is watching over us in his own way, even if it's not always obvious to us.

COVID, though, gave me a much deeper level of understanding for who my father was beyond our household. Right after graduating college in 2020, I began working at my father's company to help since there was significant downsizing and uncertainty due to the pandemic. I took on

many roles, but my main responsibilities were to cover some management duties when my father wasn't present, and HR. These positions allowed me to interact with our staff, many of whom have been with my dad and his company for over a decade. When I'd speak to them, I'd ask why they've been with us for so long and they told me how our company feels like family to them. After working and getting to know my father, they appreciated his guidance and the trust he places on them. He encouraged them to try new work methods even if there were mistakes made along the way. Through his faith in them, they were able to learn and develop their professional careers in ways they couldn't have done elsewhere and were grateful for the opportunities. It was surprising to see the level of loyalty my dad fostered, and I was proud to witness the positive impact my dad had on these people's lives.

Alternatively though, I was able to see how the level of trust he places on people can backfire when given to the wrong people. In the first year of COVID, I, my sister, and our remaining dedicated staff spent much of our time undoing mistakes and incorrect policies/procedures implemented by our predecessors. When my sister and I would mention these errors to my father, he would dismiss what we'd say and refuse to believe his staff were at fault. We would try to fight against his blind faith in these people, but he would not relent, quoting the help and support they gave at the time.

I was sometimes frustrated by these decisions since I was coping with overseeing our other businesses while he was away in Virginia focusing on the construction of a new spa facility. I had to learn the ins and outs of operating a business and saw the struggles of what it takes to run a company. It was overwhelming for me to have to think about correcting these errors while simultaneously managing maintenance, finances, operations, employee morale, and more for several locations. But it dawned on me that this was exactly my father's position, but his was on a much greater scale with much more responsibility than I've had to face.

Now, I have a much clearer understanding that during the difficulties of the pandemic, my father was under immense stress. So despite his flaws, I know that he is a good, kind person at heart and he truly cares for the people around him. I have always viewed my father as an incredibly strong, intelligent, ambitious man and have known him to have boundless energy and dedication,

which made him seem untouchable at times. This isn't just my opinion either, as this is what I often heard from his colleagues I've met over the years. So ultimately, I and the rest of my coworkers trust his decisions since he always has the best interests for us at heart.

After the construction in Virginia ended, my father returned to New York and has been focusing again on the other companies, addressing the looming issues that my sister and I tried to keep at bay while he was away but now need his personal attention. Since his return, our staff here have commented that there has been a newfound energy with the changes he is making, which has made them hopeful of positive growth for the company moving forward. On a personal level, since our family and work are intertwined, this newfound energy in the business and hope for recovery after the pandemic has made us all feel more at ease. We've been having more mental capacity to understand each other. I've noticed in recent weeks a change in my father's behavior, where he's now being even more supportive of my sisters, mom, and me. For the first time in a long time, I see a chance for my family to recover from the hardships of COVID, and this has brought a large sense of comfort I missed before. Ultimately, I just wish for my family to live peacefully and enjoy our time together after investing so much of ourselves to this company.

However, I constantly worry about what will happen to my family and our business if my father is in prison. Anyone who knows my father understands that he truly is the only one with the skillsets, knowledge, and/or power to get things done. COVID created many lasting economic and operational hardships for our business. As a family member, I can endure these struggles but other staff who aren't aware of the backend items going on understandably have difficulties doing so. However, I often placate them by saying my father will address them. My father always follows through with what he says and our staff knows that, so they decide to stick by us because of their faith in him. This trust also applies to the vendors and banks we work with. To be frank, if it weren't for my father's long-standing relationship with our banks and vendors, our business wouldn't have survived this long. Banks and vendors are drastically more lenient and cooperative with us when working with my father since his track record shows him to carry out his obligations and address any concerns promptly and thoroughly. In terms of family, he is the breadwinner and helps support my aunts and uncles, their families, and my grandparents too. He values family immensely and has always made sure each of us are taken care of. When it comes

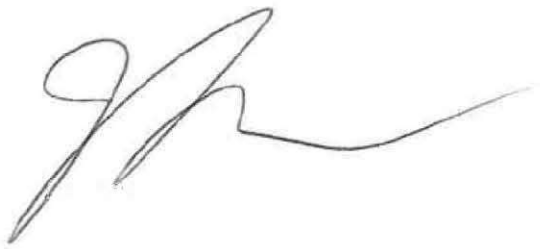
to family matters, my father is the only person my relatives respect and listen to and is the one responsible for keeping our family together. Essentially, his presence is what keeps all aspects of all our lives functioning and thriving.

My father has never been one to shy away from his responsibilities, which is something he engrained into me as well. So, I would not be so naïve as to say my father has done nothing wrong and doesn't deserve to face the consequences of his actions. On the one hand, my family and I have been prepared to accept whatever outcome is given. But on the other hand, I cannot envision my dad not being with us. He's the one who oversees our company and supports our family, and sending him to prison would really devastate many people's lives who depend on him. Thus, I just humbly ask that you view this situation with fairness and a consideration of the type of man my father is as a whole.

Thank you for your attention to my letter.

Sincerely yours,

Jessica Chon

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JC' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line.

# **EXHIBIT E**

May 6, 2023

The Honorable Lashann DeArcy Hall  
United States District Judge  
Eastern District of New York  
225 Cadman Plaza East  
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Dear Judge DeArcy Hall:

I am Steve Chon's wife, Judy Chon. I am asking you not to send my husband to prison. I want you to know about Steve's background and our life together. We started out with just love and almost no money but Steve worked so hard to chase the American Dream and provide for the family.

Steve's parents immigrated to the United States from Korea in 1980. His father managed to buy a small laundromat in the Bronx, but sold it because Steve's mother didn't want to work there. He then opened a convenience store in the Bronx and a gift shop in Astoria. But he couldn't make a living and so he lost all the money that he brought from Korea. He worked as a taxi driver, but still he lost money. My father in law's businesses have always failed and Steve being the oldest son was expected to support his parents.

Steve and I dated for three years before we got married when I was 22. Steve was just out of college. My mother-in-law was against the marriage because she believed in a Korean tradition where a girl would bring a dowry to her husband's family. She even went on a hunger strike and only stopped when she saw that Steve would marry me no matter what. She has always been bitter about me and our marriage and has never liked me. When Steve later became successful, she always asked, sarcastically, what I had done to be so "lucky." My mother was also unhappy about the marriage at first, but changed her mind because she saw how much I loved and believed in Steve.

Steve and I were very much in love. We got married in July of 1984 and started out with very little money. My family had saved a small amount of money for each child and bought us a few gifts for the wedding. My sister gave us some money also, which Steve partially used to enroll in graduate school for mechanical engineering at Rensselaer Polytechnic. I got pregnant soon after we married. We lived, in love, in a small apartment with no real kitchen, and I worked in a photo shop. Steve worked in a shoe store in New York City at the same time as graduate school. We didn't own a car, and he drove back and forth in a car my brother, Kenny, lent him.

My oldest daughter, Jennifer, was born in 1985. Steve's mother looked after Jennifer for the first three years of her life while Steve and I worked. I paid my mother-in-law when I could even though Steve told me not to do this because she was family. She was motivated by the thought that my children would pay her back in the future not because she cared about me. Our second daughter, Stephanie, was born in 1988 and our third daughter, Jessica, was born in 1998. A big age difference.



At the beginning, Steve and I really struggled financially. We didn't make much money. I was never studious and I started working at age 13 doing cleaning jobs so I was used to housework. I washed the family's clothes in the bathtub because the dark basement where there were washing machines were scary to me. I am always happy when housework is done and my family is fed.

Because we had no money, Steve dropped out of graduate school and worked full time as a clothing salesman in Chinatown. Even though he hadn't finish graduate school, he applied for a job listed in the New York Times by the Army Corps of Engineers. Luckily Steve got the job and made mechanical drawings, working on plumbing and heating. He succeeded even though he was given no guidance, and he studied hard to become a respected employee. He also worked on a project at West Point and Watertown. He worked there for 10 years and was very successful. I know this because he was sent to conferences each year, where he received awards for his hard work.

So, after working for the Army Corps of Engineers, Steve started his own business and became a professional engineer. The business was called Chon Engineering. He did everything like getting building permits and seeing that building projects were finished properly. Shortly after starting Chon Engineering, Steve acquired the necessary licenses needed by people to open small businesses. Steve was always diligent and worked late into the night or even all night. All this hard work meant Steve had a good knowledge about issues facing many businesses owned by the Korean community. He worked on building Korean restaurants, laundromats, and other businesses. Many Korean contractors asked Steve to do work for them since he was known to be fair and get things done very quickly. Steve is a confident man and bows to no-one when it comes to work. He became known for charging a bit more initially than other contractors, but because he was able to finish jobs very quickly to their satisfaction, soon people gave him more work. He became known as reliable this way. He made more money without charging extras and change orders other contractors would charge.

So my husband was thriving. His two brothers went bankrupt and came to work for Steve. Steve took them in and gave them jobs and taught them how to do the work. Steve then opened another contracting business. He eventually became highly respected and admired in New York by the Korean and Jewish business owners.

Steve then had a dream to open a Korean style spa. Steve wondered why Americans don't have this. Everywhere in Korea has spas. They are family places. Parents and children go to just relax with other Korean families. But Steve went one step further and had a concept to combine saunas with a water park for the entire family. It became similar to resorts where families spend the whole day.

To build Steve's vision of a resort spa, we had to mortgage everything we had. A very unpopular former President of Korea had the same last name Chon and people believed Steve was related to him so Korean banks would not lend him money. But Cathay Bank took a chance on Steve and loaned the necessary money. Steve took a portfolio of his idea to show a bank manager who was Chinese and he believed in Steve's vision and confidence. He said that Steve was either crazy or a genius and loaned money even though Steve had no collateral.



Steve opened his first Korean spa in College Point in Queens in 2007. Steve had trouble at first because a local politician thought this was some kind of a massage parlor connected to selling sex and there were demonstrations against it. It wasn't and the spa became very popular, and other people copied Steve with someone opening a spa in New Jersey. The New Jersey spa sent a shuttle to New York to get business and compete, but Steve didn't do the same thing in New Jersey. He said that people may step all over you but you don't have to be the same way by playing dirty tricks and be on the same level as them. Spa Castle was one of a kind when it opened, and Steve later opened a spa in Manhattan and one in Texas and Virginia.

Steve has always worked very hard and has provided well for his family. We are fed and clothed and have a nice house and a good life. A lot of Steve's business still takes place at social gatherings and I accompany him when that's necessary, even though I'm really a homebody. I'm happy taking care of our home and our kids.

An oldest Korean son is expected to take care of the family. Steve takes his duty as the oldest son very very seriously. He takes care of all his family members and even sends funds to Korea to clean his ancestors' graves. He says, "Whatever you have, you share." The same belief was instilled in me. You have to do your duty. Even though his mother still dislikes me, we still support her financially. After his brothers worked for Steve, they got their own companies because Steve helped them. He helped both of his brothers to buy a house.

Steve has also always wanted to help other people outside the family when he can. Steve often says, "We are not special. Our employees are the ones who are making us special. They are the ones that work hard for us. So we shouldn't feel we are better than others." He believes our family is lucky, and that we have a good life not because we are special. After he made money, Steve has helped so many people. He has given donations to so many Korean charities and churches. One of so many examples of how he helps people is when an employee's father was ill but had no insurance, Steve would call the employee's family to find out how to have them taken care of. This is how Steve has been since I first met him. Success hasn't changed him. Steve believes in his employees and believes in helping them. He trusts other people to be like him but they often don't do what he thought they were doing properly. And so many people have taken advantage of him wrongly. Although several employees left and opened their own businesses to compete with Steve, Steve bought their children gifts and took care of them in so many ways. Steve had no bad-feeling and wished them well. Honestly, I felt bitter but Steve was generous, saying, "They have a right to make money."

When Steve gave a job to anyone, he trusts them to do the right thing and take care of their duties. He left them to take care of things. However, some took advantage of him while they worked for him. For example, he hired someone who worked as a delivery man for a bakery to be a purchasing manager. This man was a wolf in sheep's clothing and ended up embezzling money, he stole tickets to the spas, he kept rebates from sellers, and he stole close to \$1 million. Another example is that Steve paid for his employees' vacations and they then took this as their right. Steve goes along because he says we're better off and it's his responsibility to help people not as well off. He left the Texas business in the care of general managers he trusted but who didn't do what they were supposed to. When things have gone wrong in the business, Steve takes the blame and is expected to solve the problem even though a problem is others' responsibility.

About 300 employees work for Steve now. Without Steve, many of them will probably lose their jobs. Steve is the "face" of the business. He's the one people deal with and trust. He's the one with the contacts needed for the business.

Steve's brothers also depend on him. One has young children, one of them autistic. The other brother could do more to help him but doesn't. He started to work in Virginia, but refused to stay. Steve supports them both so that their businesses will be profitable.

Steve also completely supports his father and mother. He still pays his parents' mortgage. His father was a victim of the recent tragedy with eyedrops manufactured in India contaminated with a resistant bacteria. He was in hospital for three weeks and lost one of his eyes. Steve and I visited him every day. My mother in law didn't visit him at all. She calls him a failure and ignores him. Even though my father in law is in a long term facility now, the germ may be in his system and he may still be found contagious and isolated. He can barely see out of the eye he has left. He feels deserted by his wife and calls Steve frequently to complain. Steve contacts his doctors to check on his father's condition and sets up his appointments. All of the care of Steve's father falls on me and Steve because the oldest son is responsible.

Judge DeArcy Hall, I can write on and on about how great my husband is. My hope in this letter is to help you understand what a truly good person Steve is at heart and how he has helped so many people while he has worked so hard. If you send Steve to prison, we will suffer. His father will suffer. His employees will also suffer because many will lose their jobs. Please don't send my husband to prison. It will truly be a great loss. Thank you for reading my long letter.

Judy Chon

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Judy', with a long, flowing horizontal stroke extending to the right.

# **EXHIBIT F**

Stephanie  
Chon

REDACTED

REDACTED

June 10, 2023

The Honorable LaShann DeArcy Hall  
United States District Judge  
Eastern District of New York  
225 Cadman Plaza East  
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Dear Honorable Judge DeArcy Hall,  
My name is Stephanie Chon, Steve Chon's middle daughter and I am 35 years old. I have been working on and off in my father's business since 2010 and am now the owner/operator of a Wellness Club in Virginia that is part of my father's overall business. In connection with this business I rely tremendously on my father's participation and advice.  
The letter attached below is the one and only letter I have ever gotten from my father and I can't remember when or why he gave it to me. It wouldn't have held much weight at that time because I was too young to truly understand the reality he was living. But today, this letter is one of my most prized possessions. It shows the love of a struggling father, who needed to sacrifice time with the family to provide for the family, all the while navigating cultural/financial/language

barriers. This was his American Dream and building a business was his way to support all those around him.

My parents always did the best they could do, with what they had. They were at first very young parents, broke and living off credit card debit, not able to afford daycare or have any help with us kids. My mom stayed home with us and took care of the house and finances, while my father held multiple jobs and worked very long hours. After his day job, he would come home and eat dinner with us after which he would begin his freelance work working on architectural drawings until the early morning. My mom would be up alongside him each of those nights, sometimes pulling all-nighters, making sure he had enough coffee or at least someone to keep him company. After a couple hours sleep, the grind would continue each day until the weekend, when he went to yet a third job.

On top of his responsibilities as a father to support his immediate family, my dad holds his duties as the eldest of three sons in a traditional Korean family very seriously. For as long as I can remember, he has supported/employed his brothers and their families, and of course supported my grandparents. His American Dream is to give his children the opportunities for a better and easier life than he has, to see his brothers succeed in life, and to ensure that his parents are taken care of. The pressure he was under as he added more people onto his list to care for fueled him to work hard and build a successful business to give back to all who are a part of his life. And in turn, he puts the staff who make up his businesses on the highest of pedestals, giving them each his trust, support, and, sometimes unfortunately, the benefit of the doubt.

My father has had many challenges trying to make it in America, but there have been a couple of instrumental mentors in his life who took a chance on him when no one else did.

Those mentors, who my father still thanks to this day, help catapult him closer to his American Dream. My father never

took that for granted and strives every day to be that kind of person to all his staff; someone who opens doors for them and takes a chance on them when everyone else says no. He preaches at every business gathering how grateful we should be to live in America, where with hard work, support in one another, and sacrifice you could achieve anything you put your mind to. He believes that trusting the staff, who he attributes his success to, is him giving back to them his gratitude.

I have come to realize that what I might have thought was my father neglecting his family was in fact my father sacrificing everything for our wellbeing. After realizing this as I have gotten older, I have overcome any resentment I might feel towards my father. Realizing this, restructuring the business, and rebuilding our relationships with him, I finally began to feel that he is closer to me and my other immediate family members. But this sentencing before Your Honor has been haunting our family for years, at the same time as we are rebuilding our family and making up for childhoods where my father constantly worked. We have all become so much closer and now dread having my father again absent from our lives.

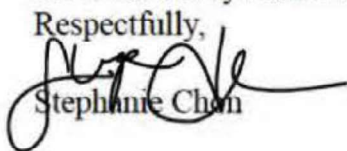
Your Honor, I hope that you see past my father's guilty plea and can see a glimpse of how he got into this mess. As you can see, his dream has been to make a difference in as many peoples lives as he can, and this dream has been our entire family's load to carry. We have all put our lives into my father's business because we know it is all ultimately for us. It took him time to realize that his quest to give us everything has left us all with a feeling of familial loss, and also time for me to realize that this feeling came about because my father was working to bear the load of supporting his family. He is not perfect, but he has really been making up for lost time with our immediate family. If you take him away, our family will lose all our tremendous momentum to growing closer as a family. It will further delay the development of all of our lives if he is taken away from us.

Me, my sisters, and my mom would love to live a normal life, to follow our own dreams and be happy with my father's involvement and help.

But that is my selfish wishes. The other sickening worry is how I can work to survive the businesses without my father's continuous help. From the restructuring, COVID, and post-COVID labor shortage, our once 500 employee corporation has shrunk to 300 employees and myself as the COO (but really relying on my father) and my father as the CEO. We were forced to close one business during the Pandemic as our rent was over a quarter of a million dollars a month. We are still financially recovering from our losses and, with our opening a new business, I really don't know how the businesses will survive if my father is no longer present to oversee his whole business enterprise. I am terrified that I cannot handle all this, in large part because many of the businessmen that we in turn rely on trust only my father. I now can truly understand my father's stress when 300 people's livelihood is on the line.

Your Honor, I ask for the sake of my new found family closeness, and for the sake of all our employees and their families who rely on my father's involvement in the business for their employment, that you impose a sentence that allows my father to continue to work with all of us and to support all these employees and their families. I ask that you give him a chance as he has always done to others.

Respectfully,



Stephanie Chen

My lovely daughter, Stephanie:

Even if I don't see you everyday  
or night, even if I don't spend  
much time with you, ~~I love~~  
my heart is always with you.

I think about you in school,  
you in future, you in ~~your~~ youth, etc

I love you Stephanie.

I love all of you.

Daddy.

Did you see me waving  
hands in this morning when  
you got on the bus?



# EXHIBIT G

The Honorable LaShann DeArcy Hall  
United States District Judge  
Eastern District of New York  
225 Cadman Plaza East  
Brooklyn, New York 11201

Your Honor,

My name is Jungmi Chun, and I've been working at Spa Castle in College Point, Queens since the spa opened in 2007. The employees have always worked tirelessly together like family, unified by a supportive sense of community and work environment. As for me, I've dedicated nearly half of my life in America working with these people. Many events have occurred over these 15 years, such as a global pandemic, along with a series of personal challenges.

In the earlier days of my employment, my father passed away back in Korea due to cancer. As a mother of two young kids, as overwhelming as it was, I tried my best to work through it but could not bring myself to go to work. As I spiraled deeper into my anguish, I received an unexpected call from Steve. With his comforting condolences, he reassured me that the company would welcome me with open arms when I was ready to return. The empathy and warmth he bestowed was unforgettable, especially considering that I was only one employee out of nearly two-hundred, working at the Juice Farm station at the time. When I returned to the spa after a few weeks, Steve provided compensation for the time that I was unable to work. I found my will to live and work with the same joy and energy as before. As I reflect on his kindness even now, I cannot imagine that anyone else would be able to do the same.

Opportunity found its way to me as my motivation was rekindled. I was offered a managerial position at Spa Castle. Though I wasn't confident in my skills to take on the

offer, when I expressed my hesitancy, Steve replied that my passion would be enough. His sincere encouragement revealed his genuine interest in each employee's growth, and his integrity shone through his provision of equal opportunity regardless of educational background.

As time went by, my son grew to become a young adult. Not a year passed since his first year at college before he was diagnosed with lupus. Our family was distraught upon hearing the news. I had to inform the company of my circumstances for my leave.

Steve was there for me yet again. Understanding that family was first, he helped me fix my schedule to accommodate for the time to care for my sick child, and even proposed a plan where I'd be able to work remotely. One by one, my co-workers offered to distribute my workload amongst themselves to ease my burden. Though I couldn't possibly agree to such benevolent terms, this heart-warming experience of community and support was more than enough to nourish me.

To me, Steve is someone who gives me courage. Without a doubt, many other employees experience his compassion to this day. With this in mind, I sincerely and respectfully ask that you graciously give thought to the countless number of people who are guarded under his wing when reaching your decision.

With gratitude,



Jungmi Chun

08/08/2023

[jungmi0845@gmail.com](mailto:jungmi0845@gmail.com)

REDACTED

# **EXHIBIT H**

Kenneth Cooke

REDACTED

June 21, 2023

The Honorable LaShann DeArcy Hall  
United States District Judge  
Eastern District of New York  
225 Cadman Plaza East  
Brooklyn, New York 11201

Dear Judge DeArcy Hall:

My name is Kenneth Cooke. I am a physician who has been practicing in NY for over 30 years, as well as the brother-in-law of Mr. Steve Chon, who I call "Hyoungnim" ("older brother" in Korean). I have known Hyoungnim since I was a teenager when he and my older sister started dating. Both of our families were immigrants from Korea who put down our roots in the Bronx, searching for a better life in the United States and trying to achieve the American dream. For all the years I have known Steve, I am proud to say that he is MY Hyoungnim. I want to emphasize that my pride in him is not based on simple familial relationship but rather from having witnessed his deeds and accomplishments for so many years.

His career began as a minimum wage part-time shoe salesman, a job he worked to put himself through college. After he graduated from Polytechnic Institute of NYU as an engineer, he worked for the NYC government for a few years and then opened a one-man engineering firm in Queens, NY. My sister was the sole secretary, receptionist, office-manager, and trouble shooter in the office. While in business for themselves, they struggled at first, maxed out their credit card limits, and at times worked in the dark to save money on electricity. Even during these hard times, my Hyoungnim never gave up, and with his tenacity and God-given intelligence, he somehow passed the NYC master plumber test and became the first Korean-American licensed by the NYC Department of Buildings as a master plumber in the city.

After that start, Hyounghnim worked to obtain more engineering licenses and his business began to do relatively well. Despite his modest accomplishments, he had further ambitions and visions and started his entrepreneurship. He built and started a large Korean style spa in Queens, NY. Despite all the financial and political roadblocks, with sheer chutzpah, hard work, and blessings, he was able to build it. His other projects subsequently spread to different states like Texas and Virginia. The problems that he overcame, the facilities that he built, and the amount of intensity he put into these projects left me in awe of his energy and accomplishments.

More impressive than his accomplishments are his ways, personality, and character. While he was climbing the ladder of success, he not only ascended himself but also always looked out for others, making sure that he brought many hard workers along with him including his brothers, friends, employees, and contractors. Many of these people have continued to work with him for many years or even decades, which is unusual in these modern times of job-hopping, because of his loyalty, generosity, and support. After all that is said and done, in a word, my Hyounghnim is a “*mensh*.”

I have read the biographies of American financial titans such as Rockefeller and Carnegie and learned that the road to the American dream is neither straight nor smoothly paved. Rather, it is riddled with potholes, broken bottles, and a myriad of incomprehensible signs and roadblocks. I am sure that many of those who have managed to achieve the American dream had to take detours, alleyways, and sideroads. I am sure my Hyounghnim is no exception, but I have known him long enough and well enough to be sure that he did not set out with an intent to break the law. But he did do wrong, and he has acknowledged that, as well as his remorse.

He will get his punishment from Your Honor for those wrongs. I am just hoping and praying that his punishment is imbued with a large degree of mercy. I know that Hyounghnim, his wife, his children, and his whole family have already learned a harsh lesson with the sword of Damocles hanging over them for the last years as investigations and judicial process moved along. And I know he will never do anything like this again.

I am sure that, if Your Honor gives him the chance, Mr. Steve Chon will be much more of a positive asset to his community, employees, and family, as he has already been in the past, than if he is sent to prison where he can help no-one.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kenneth S. Cooke". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with some capitalization.

Kenneth Cooke

# **EXHIBIT I**



Sam SangKi Han  
REDACTED  
REDACTED

September 12, 2023

The Honorable LaShann DeArcy Hall  
United States District Judge  
Eastern District of New York  
225 Cadman Plaza East  
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Dear Judge DeArcy Hall,

My name is Sam Han. I am the president and founder of TKC (a/k/a the Korean Channel), the first Korean-American cable television station in the United States. TKC was established in 1986 and has become the premier 24-hour Korean broadcasting company servicing the East Coast, providing news and entertainment to more than 3 million households. Because of TKC's significant role in disseminating current news to the Korean-American community, I have been placed in a unique situation of having access to many business and other leaders who are important to our community.

I write this letter on behalf of Mr. Steve Chon. I have known Steve for over 15 years. Since I serve as a member of the Board of Trustees of Flushing Hospital Medical Center and am the founder of Arirang Foundation, a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote future generations of Korean-American leaders, I frequently attend meetings and meet many outstanding persons in our community, industry, and profession. I met Steve at one of those functions and we quickly became friends when we realized our shared commitment to supporting the Korean-American community. In fact, Steve is one of the select individuals who has been recognized by TKC and the Arirang Foundation as a distinguished leader in their respective fields and honored during the Home Plate Ceremony at Citi Field, throwing the honorary first pitch for the New York Mets in 2018. It is a day meant to celebrate and honor leaders and community organizations who have contributed to the growth of the Korean-American community.

Throughout the years, Steve has supported many causes and efforts to encourage, assist, and advance the next generation of Korean-American leaders by donating his money and his time. He participated in several special community talk show programs on TKC to exchange and share his experience and knowledge. Steve has been kind and has always provided a lending hand. Because I am in the news media industry, I became aware of Steve's legal problems early on. I know that many business owners are constantly dealing with various employee issues, including hiring qualified employees. Inevitably, discussions with regard to this issue frequently surface among business owners, big and small. It is unfortunate, but many young and able individuals who are qualified to legally work in the U.S. will not work in certain areas that are perceived labor intensive or below their standard or they ask for payment in a particular manner

that put business owners in a bind. I am hopeful that the government will somehow resolve these well-known issues in our immigration system.

We all have flaws and make many mistakes, big and small. And I know that Steve has made a mistake and he knows that too. But I respectfully ask that Your Honor consider the many contributions that he has made and continues to make to the community.

Respectfully yours,



Sam SangKi Han

# **EXHIBIT J**

August 5, 2023

The Honorable LaShann DeArcy Hall  
United States District Judge  
Eastern District of New York  
225 Cadman Plaza East  
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Hello.

My name is Jude Hwang (Hwang Kyung Hwan), and I am the Facility Manager at Spa Castle's Dallas location.

I am writing this letter in hopes of offering some insight regarding Mr. Chon that may be of help.

I first met Steve Chon in May of 2009 at Spa Castle's New York location. At that time, I came from South Korea to the U.S. for work. From the first time I met him, Mr. Chon gave me a different impression compared to other CEOs I had encountered during my career. I was 35 years old at the time, and I had previously worked at a construction company in Korea. After deciding to work in the United States, I had an interview with Mr. Chon through a Korean recruitment agency. I had never lived in the United States and I had no knowledge of American workplace culture. Despite my lack of experience in his field, Mr. Chon graciously provided me with an opportunity to work for him.

Unlike the typical authoritative CEO, I sensed that Mr. Chon genuinely cared for and valued each individual employee of his company. His life journey, which he has diligently led even before starting his business, has also left a profound impact and influence on his employees. Furthermore, I saw his efforts through his business endeavors to try to benefit the community.

I am one of many employees who benefitted greatly from Mr. Chon's support. I began my career at Spa Castle New York as a juice bar staff member, and through the opportunities Mr. Chon has given me, I also worked in the men's locker room and served as a valet parking team leader. In 2012, I was promoted to Purchasing Manager at Dallas Spa Castle, and thanks to the support and guidance from Mr. Chon, I transformed from someone unfamiliar with the spa industry into an experienced professional. Eventually, in 2015, I was promoted again to Facility Manager. To this day, 14 years later, I continue to oversee all operations at Dallas Spa Castle. As you can see, Mr. Steve Chon has provided me with numerous opportunities, allowing me to accumulate valuable experiences and live the American work life I had dreamed of.

In addition, Mr. Steve Chon is the type of person who deeply cares for his employees who are in a difficult situation, including their personal matters. He has offered numerous opportunities for eager employees to establish themselves and live in the United States with stable jobs. Many employees, including myself, were able to settle down in the U.S. because of the help of Steve Chon.

I came to the U.S. in May of 2009 to work under Mr. Chon in New York, and later moved to Texas in 2012 to work at Spa Castle's Dallas location. By 2013/2014, I had fully established myself in Texas. Through Mr. Chon's green card sponsorship, I was able to receive my U.S. permanent resident card. Since becoming Facility Manager at Spa Castle in 2015, Mr. Chon has offered me a wealth of personal advice. Thanks to his encouragement and help, I met my wife through work and got married in 2016. Following that, we welcomed a child, and Mr. Chon generously also increased my salary to support my household. Mr. Steve Chon is a significant benefactor to many employees, including myself.

On one hand, it might appear that Mr. Chon, being the CEO of a large company, would be distant and difficult to approach. However, he proved to be very approachable and warm-hearted toward his employees. He shared meals and engaged in social gatherings with all employees without any sense of formality, always aiming to establish a genuine connection with his staff. Moreover, despite his demanding business commitments, Steve Chon dedicated himself to caring for his parents as the eldest son of his family, showing warmth and respect for his family and staff alike. He is always ready to help and often proactively seeks opportunities to do so, even extending assistance at times to those who are in need but don't ask for help.

CEO Steve Chon is a necessary and crucial figure for our employees. If a vacancy were to emerge due to his absence, I believe many individuals who have grown and evolved alongside him could face major challenges. All of his forward-looking business plans, including the very existence of his company, are indispensable for the employees, their families, and their well-being.

Thank you.

Kyeonghwan (Jude) Hwang

REDACTED



August 5, 2023

The Honorable LaShann DeArcy Hall  
United States District Judge  
Eastern District of New York  
225 Cadman Plaza East  
Brooklyn, NY 11201

안녕하세요.

달라스 스파케슬 시설 담당 매니저 주드 황 (황경환) 이라고 합니다.

저희 회장님 관련해서 조금이나마 도움을 드리고자 탄원서를 적어 보냅니다.

스티브 전, 제가 그를 처음 만난 건 2009년 5월 스파케슬 뉴욕에서였습니다. 그당시에는 한국에서 미국에 일하러 왔었고, 처음 만났을때부터 스티브 전은 보통 제가 그동안의 직장 생활에서 봐 왔던 CEO와 다른 느낌의 사람이었습니다. 제가 그때 35살이었고, 그동안 한국에서 건설회사에서 일했습니다. 미국에서 일해야겠다는 결심이후로 한국 채용업체를 통해 전회장님과 면접을 보게되었습니다. 미국에서 살아본적 없었고, 당연히 미국직장 생활대해서도 몰랐습니다. 저는 전회장님이 일하시는 분야에서 한번도 일해본적이 없었음에도 불구하고, 전회장님이 저에게 기회를 주셨습니다.

보통 CEO, 회사의 최고 경영자의 권위적인 느낌보다는 회사 직원들을 많이 생각 하고 위하는 분이런걸 느꼈습니다. 그가 사업을 하기 까지 그의 성실했던 삶은 다른 직원들에게도 귀감이 되었습니다. 또한 그의 비즈니스가 사회에도 도움이 되도록 노력 하는 부분도 보였습니다.

저는 그런 도움을 받았은 많은 직원 중에 한명입니다. 저는 뉴욕 스파케슬에 주스바 스테프로 시작했지만, 회장님이 주신 기회를 통해 남자 락커룸에서도 일하고, valet 파킹 팀장으로도 일했습니다. 2012년도에는 제가 Dallas 스파케슬에서 Purchasing Manager로 승진 했으며, 회장님 덕분에 스파분야에서 일해본적 없는사람에서 언젠가 많은 경험을 쌓아왔던 직장인이 되었죠. 결국엔 2015년도에 또 승진하며, Facility Manager가 되었습니다. 지금도 14년째 근무중이며 Dallas 스파케슬대한 모든일들 돌보고 있습니다. 보실수있다 싶히, 스티브 전 회장님이 저에게 많은 기회를 제공하셨고, 덕분에 많은 경험을 쌓아나가며 제가 꿈꿔왔던 미국직장생활을 하며 살게되었습니다.

스티브 전 회장님은 사정이 어려운 직원이 있으면 그직원의 사적인 부분까지도 마음을 써주는 그러한 분이었습니다. 또한 회사에 성실한 직원에게 일할 기회를 주어 미국에서 자리 잡고 살수 있도록 배려하여 주었습니다. 스티브 전에게 도움을 받아 미국에 정착 할수 있었던 직원도 저를 비롯 하여 여럿 있었습니다.

제가 2009 년 5 월에 회장님 아래 일하러 왔었고, 2012 년도에 회장님이 운영하시는 Dallas 스파케슬에 일하러 가면서 2013/2014 년도에 Texas 에서 정착하게 되었습니다. 전회장님이 저의 영주권을 후원해주심으로써 결국엔 미국 영주권을 얻게 되었습니다. 그리고 제가 2015 년도에 스파케슬 Facility Manager 되어서 전회장님이 저에게 개인적인 조언을 많이 해주셨습니다. 회장님의 격려를 통해 같은 회사에서 저의 아내를 만나게 되었고 2016 에 결혼 했습니다. 그 이후에 아이를 갖으면서, 회장님이 저의 가정을 위해 연봉도 올려주셨습니다. 스티브 전 회장님은 많은 직원들에게, 물론 제게도 큰 은인입니다.

어떻게 보면 전회장님은 큰 회사의 CEO 타서 저희 직원들 한테는 다가가기 어려운 사람으로 보이실수있습니다. 하지만, 그런 선입견을 넘어서 회장님은 직원들에게 참 친근하고 친밀한 사람이었습니다. 아무런 부담없이 식사도 같이 하고 회식도 하면서 직원과 인간적인 마음으로 가까워 지려고 한 분이었습니다. 또한 스티브 전은 가족중에 장남으로 가족을 보살피며 비즈니스로 바쁜 날을 보내면서도 연로하신 부모님을 지극 정성으로 모시고 가족과 자재분들에게도 따뜻한 가장으로의 모습은 직원들에게 존경받을 사람으로 비춰 지고 있습니다. 그는 항상 사람들을 도우려 하며 때로는 능동적으로 그런 기회를 찾습니다. 아무도 요청하지 않았을 때조차 도움을 주는 일이 종종 있었습니다.

저희 직원에게는 CEO 스티브 전이 꼭 필요한 사람입니다. 그의 신변에 문제가 생겨 공석이 생긴다면 그와 함께 지내온 많은 사람들이 곤경에 처할 것으로 생각합니다. 앞으로 그가 계획한 모든 비즈니스 플랜과 회사의 존재를 회사 직원들과 직원들의 가족을 위해서는 그가 없어선 안된다고 생각합니다.

감사합니다.

Kyeonghwan (Jude) Hwang

REDACTED





# **EXHIBIT K**

Daehee Jo

REDACTED

8/25/2023

The Honorable Lashann DeArcy Hall  
United States District Court  
Eastern District of New York  
225 Cadman Plaza East  
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Dear Judge Lashann DeArcy Hall,

I hope this letter finds you in good health. I am writing to present a petition in support of Steve Chon, who is currently before the court. I am deeply convinced that the information I share in this letter will provide a comprehensive understanding of Steve Chon's character and the circumstances surrounding the case.

My name is Daehee Jo, and I am a manager at Spa Castle Texas Inc. I have known Steve Chon for 10 years, and I can attest to his integrity, moral values, and contributions to his company. Throughout my working with Steve Chon, I have consistently witnessed his dedication to his family, friends, and colleagues. His dedication is explained below.

Steve Chon is a successful first-generation immigrant who has not only inspired me but also many other employees at the company. Through many meetings, he has mentored and shown me the direction to achieve the American Dream in my otherwise ordinary life. He emphasized the importance of people over money in many aspects such as leadership, ethics, initiative, and professionalism, providing valuable advice. He constantly encouraged us to apply ourselves to be better and be positive to society. He did this not just by words, but he showed us by his actions.

Although he is the CEO, he considers each employee as family and has always been helpful in their development, not only as a successful employee but in their personal lives. Especially, his efforts as an immigrant to work hard for his goals conveyed a positive message to many employees that 'we can also do it and make it.' Many of the employees at the company are young (in their early to mid-30's) and Steve Chon provides a fatherly figure that many employees look up to him for advice and work diligently so they can also achieve the American Dream.

As another example, as someone who is not just a CEO but a fellow human being, he cares for the life events of all employees, shares in their joys, and sorrows, and tries his best to provide financial or other forms of assistance within his capacity. For a few examples, the General Manager of the New York branch recently lost his father. Upon hearing this, Steve Chon provided assistance both from a company

perspective and personally. Additionally, Steve Chon continues to cultivate strong relationships not only with current employees but also with former employees who have left their positions. He shares in their joys and sorrows, making diligent efforts to build deep bonds because he is a caring person. He cares for human beings and their well-being.

Furthermore, Steve Chon, with his engineering and operational expertise in the spa industry, is the person responsible for making Spa Castle possible in the United States. He successfully localized the specialized skills from Korea to the US and if Steve Chon were to leave the company, I believe it would be almost impossible to operate the company. The company will not be able to make a profit to support itself and will cause many young employees to lose their jobs.

Specifically, facilities such as spa pools, traditional Korean saunas, and hydro jets have been designed and mechanically equipped using Steve Chon's expertise. If there are issues in this regard, the competence of Spa Castle facility staff can address them to some extent, but fundamental problem-solving can only be accomplished by Steve Chon. Furthermore, the business must continue to evolve to align with customer needs. Without Steve Chon's technological capabilities and creative vision, the company will be unable to progress and meet our customers' needs.

I am writing this letter not to undermine the legal process or the court's authority, but to present a more complete picture of Steve Chon's character. It is my firm belief that the circumstances leading to this case are not indicative of his true nature.

I also understand that the court's role is to balance justice with mercy. I urge you, Your Honor, to consider Steve Chon's history and contributions when making your decision. I believe that the impact of a favorable judgment will extend beyond Steve Chon to his family, friends, and to the company at large.

I kindly request that you take this letter into consideration during your deliberations. It is my sincere hope that the information I have provided will support your understanding of Steve Chon's character and contribute to a fair and just resolution of this case.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. I remain hopeful that your judgment will reflect both the legal considerations and the positive impact on all of the lives positively affected by Steve Chon.

With utmost respect,

Daehee Jo

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of fluid, connected loops and strokes, representing the name Daehee Jo.

# **EXHIBIT L**



April 22, 2023

The Honorable LsShann DeArcy Hall  
United States District Judge  
Eastern District of New York  
225 Cadman Plaza East  
Brooklyn, New York 11201

Dear Judge DeArcy Hall:

I am Kwang Kim, currently work as chairperson for Korean American Heritage Society, Inc., an organization whose aim is to enlighten and empower the public about Korean American history and culture through educational programs and other outreach. I previously served as a social worker and later as the president of Korean Community Services of Metropolitan New York, Inc. (KCS) for 30 years from 1988 to 2018. KCS is a community based social service organization serving over 1,200 individuals a day through 6 program sites in NYC.

I have known Mr. Steve Chon for many years, since he opened a business even before Spa Castle. He is someone who has always been very concerned towards the well-being of seniors and the community. He used to come to the Korean American Senior Center, one of the 6 programs sites of KCS, and donated money for food and educational materials for seniors. When he opened the Spa Castle in 2007, he invited seniors for free and discounted access to the spa that became a proud symbol of Korean culture and beloved place by the members of other communities, too. My daughter serving US army has enjoyed the spa with her non-Korean American colleagues as a way to share our culture. Out of his busy schedule, Steve often contributed his time as a speaker for KCS' youth program, members of the Korean American Chamber of Commerce, and many other community gatherings to share his experience and vision in business. He also helped those organizations with generous financial support and encouragement.

I understand that he has done wrong with tax issues, but he has also done great service to our community especially seniors and children and people in need. As a person who knows Mr. Chon and has seen the good things he does. I beg your mercy to let him stay with the community and continue his work without any lapses. I and members of the community who have been with him do not hesitate to say that he is reliable, respectful and that he is an asset to the community that relies on his support.

Korean American Heritage Society

REDACTED

(718) 799-0211

info@kahs.us | www.kahs.us



KAHS

Looking forward to hearing the good news from you, I remain Should you have any questions or further inquiries, please contact me 917-517-9374, or [info@kahs.us](mailto:info@kahs.us)

Sincerely yours,

Kwang S. Kim, LMSW  
Chairperson of the Board of Directors

Korean American Heritage Society

REDACTED

(718) 799-0211

[info@kahs.us](mailto:info@kahs.us) | [www.kahs.us](http://www.kahs.us)

# **EXHIBIT M**



Honorable Lashann DeArcy Hall  
United States District Judge  
Eastern District of New York  
225 Cadman Plaza East  
Brooklyn, New York 11201

I worked with Mr. Steve Chon for over 10 years of my life. I worked with him on many projects from land acquisition, various permitting, land use zoning approval, and building technician roles, such as monitoring build progress, negotiating with suppliers, preparing site plans, and project managing.

When I worked with Mr. Chon, I learned very much from him. His focus and incredible drive to work was put into practice and he helped me have the same focus and drive in my own life. As a Professional Engineer and holder of a Master Plumber license, he has impacted and helped a lot of Korean Americans in Queens and retail stores, laundry, restaurants, and the local community all over NYC.

And for his employees, Mr. Chon takes care and has faith in what they are working on and cares for them. He is especially kind when an employee has a death in the family. Mr. Chon extends personal condolences and condolatory leave. In 2017, my mother was very sick and I needed to go to Korea.

Mr. Chon bought my plane ticket and gave me extra time off so I was able to visit my mother. When my mother died, and I needed to go to Korea again Mr. Chon helped me again even though I didn't ask him for help. He always helps many employees who are sick or their family is sick by providing various bonuses and benefits. He is very caring and I've seen him help other employees many times. Mr. Chon is a very good person.

Mr. Chon is a role model for Korean American and he is so good to his employee. I ask you to forgive him and show him kindness.

Thank you-



Hyuk Lee

REDACTED

August 6, 2023.

# **EXHIBIT N**

Joshua Lee  
REDACTED

August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023

The Honorable Lashann DeArcy Hall  
United States District Judge  
Eastern District of New York  
225 Cadman Plaza East  
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Re: Character Reference for Steve Chon

Your Honor,

I am writing to provide a heartfelt character reference for Mr. Steve Chon, whom I have worked very closely with since January 2019. As his subordinate at C. Castle Group, I have not only witnessed Steve's exceptional leadership and compassion towards the people he works with but have also personally experienced the impact of his mentorship.

When I first joined C. Castle Group, I was grappling with imposter syndrome, unsure if I had the necessary experience to meet the expectations of my new role as a director of operations. However, Steve saw potential in me during the interview process and took a chance on me. He hired me to report directly to him and other executives, assisting with reports, presentations, and various other critical tasks.

During those initial stages, I recall Steve taking it upon himself to regularly check in on my progress and reassure me that he saw something in me. His unwavering support and encouragement helped me overcome my self-doubts and grow into my role with newfound confidence. Over the years, Steve continuously provided me with opportunities to explore new fields and take on responsibilities that were beyond my immediate expertise. He entrusted me with tasks in government affairs and outreach, risk management, corporate strategy, and overseeing all insurance matters at the company. Each step of the way, he took a chance on me, and whenever I rose to the occasion, he rewarded me with even more opportunities for growth.

This personal journey I experienced under Steve's mentorship is not unique; it echoes his approach towards all his employees. Steve has a remarkable ability to identify potential in individuals, often those overlooked by traditional standards. He takes chances on people who may not fit the typical profile for advancement in the business world – individuals without formal education or those who begin in labor jobs. Remarkably, more than 75% of our current managers, now holding significant leadership positions within the company, started as low-entry staff, including but not limited to janitorial staff and dishwashers. Through Steve's unwavering support and guidance, they have blossomed both personally and professionally, proving that opportunities, when given, can lead to incredible growth and success as I have experienced firsthand.

One particular incident that showcases Steve's character occurred when a colleague of ours, an immigrant with limited resources, faced a health scare without full insurance coverage. Without hesitation, Steve took it upon himself to cover the colleague's medical expenses and even connected him with top healthcare providers. Steve wasn't looking for praise or anything in return. He just saw someone in need, knew he could help, and did it. Steve's compassionate gesture and genuine concern for our colleague's well-being made a lasting impact on all of us who witnessed it.

Moreover, Steve's dedication to excellence has been instrumental in the growth and success of C. Castle Group. Under his leadership, the company has expanded from a single outpost to multiple locations, including spas in Manhattan, Texas, and Virginia. Steve's hands-on approach and expertise in various aspects of the business have been crucial in these ventures' achievements. I had the privilege of witnessing his tireless efforts to open the Alexandria, Virginia branch, where he created hundreds of local jobs in the community. Despite his executive position, he was personally present every day at the construction site, working right alongside his staff and the contractors. Steve is not the type of executive to sit in the office; he is always on the grounds, supporting and working with his team.

During the tumultuous days of the COVID-19 pandemic, when uncertainty loomed over the business landscape, Steve Chon's leadership stood out as a beacon of compassion and responsibility. As news of other companies unceremoniously laying off their staff without regard for healthcare flooded the media, Steve made a stark contrast with his unwavering concern for his employees' welfare. In March 2020, before any government announcements, Steve took it upon himself to cover certain expenses for employees who did not qualify under existing measures, ensuring their health and financial security were prioritized during those unprecedented times.

In 2021, when the Manhattan spa faced unfortunate closure due to COVID and funds were scarce, Steve's commitment to his staff's well-being remained steadfast. Despite having no legal obligation, he insisted on ensuring that the accrued paid time off (PTO) of our staff was paid out. In a situation where other executives might have opted for cost-cutting measures, Steve's priority was clear: his staff's livelihood came first. His decision to support his team, even when resources were limited, exemplified a level of empathy and integrity rarely seen in today's corporate landscape. Steve's actions during those critical moments exemplify a leadership style that puts people above profit margins. His genuine care for his employees' health, financial stability, and overall well-being is a testament to his character and compassion.

Losing Steve Chon's guidance and expertise, even temporarily, would send ripples of impact far beyond the walls of C. Castle Group. Having had worked closely with him over the years, I not only witnessed his dedication to the company but also got to know his entire family. Steve's commitment to both his professional and personal responsibilities is nothing short of extraordinary. I have been amazed by his ability to juggle a myriad of commitments, maintaining a steady hand at the helm of C. Castle Group, while also being a devoted husband, father, and caregiver to his elderly parents. I have personally seen him show up for his family with the same level of dedication and passion that he brings to the workplace.



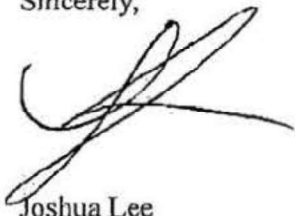
Steve's role as the primary caretaker for his elderly parents is nothing short of inspiring. At various company functions, I had the honor of meeting his parents, and it was evident how much they relied on Steve's love and support. Recently, his father endured some severe health scares, leading to months of hospitalization and ongoing rehabilitation. Despite the emotional toll and the demanding circumstances, Steve has remained a steadfast and ever-present advocate for his parents, ensuring they receive the best possible care and support, all while continuing to oversee a multi-state business operation.

The impact of losing Steve's guidance and leadership extends beyond the workplace; it profoundly affects his family's well-being and his ability to continue providing essential support to his parents. Moreover, hundreds of employees, myself included, who have relied on his steady hand, professional and personal advice, and compassionate leadership, would face uncertain times without his presence. Steve Chon's devotion to both his family and his company is truly remarkable. His ability to manage such demanding family circumstances while still showing up with unwavering dedication to his employees is a testament to his strength of character and exceptional leadership. The interconnectedness of his personal and professional life reflects a profound commitment to both his loved ones and those he leads at C. Castle Group.

In conclusion, almost day by day, I witnessed very closely Steve Chon's character, integrity, and outstanding leadership. His positive impact on the company, his employees, and the community at large is undeniable. I urge Your Honor to consider the real-life examples of Steve's compassionate actions and the dire consequences of losing his guidance when making your sentencing decision.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Joshua Lee', written over a horizontal line.

Joshua Lee

# EXHIBIT O

Hon. LeShann DeArcy Hall  
U.S. District Judge  
Eastern District of New York  
225 Cadman Plaza East  
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Dear Judge:

Today I am writing this letter in regard to Mr. Chon. Whatever he may have done, I ask you for his forgiveness. I have worked for him for over 14 years and he is a very good boss who cares for his employees. You can learn a lot about a person by how they treat others, and Mr. Chon has always treated me and people I manage with care and respect. I started working for Mr. Chon in 2007, and except for a brief time off during COVID, I have been working for him as a team leader managing valet parking and transportation services for Spa Castle.

I came to America in the summer of 1995. Although I didn't have much money, I came to America to study classical music. I guess you never know about the future since I wound up working two jobs to make a living for my family instead of studying music only about a year later. When I came to America, I worked a morning shift at a deli so I can be home by 3:00pm to pick up my two daughters from school and to take care of them until my wife would come home at around 7:30pm from working at a nail salon. I would then leave to work as a taxi driver from 8pm to 3am. This period of time of my life was one of the most difficult period because I could only sleep 3 or 4 hours a day on average.

I came to know Mr. Chon from my night job working as a taxi driver. Many Koreans like to socialize by having meals together. Back in 1990's, you could make a decent money driving a taxi for people at night. It's because many Koreans like to drink alcohol with dinner, and they can't drive home by themselves afterwards. Mr. Chon became a familiar customer for the taxi company I worked for, and since I would frequently drove him home, we befriended each other. Maybe it was fate, but while I was driving Mr. Chon home one night, I got in an accident which caused about \$15,000 of damage to Mr. Chon's car. Without any complaint, Mr. Chon immediately forgave me and I was very fortunate to have met a good person.

As stated before, I would frequently drive Mr. Chon home since he would call my taxi company and ask for me to drive him home after his business dinners. In January of 2007, while talking about my tough situation and needing to work two low paying jobs, Mr. Chon offered me a job at his company. He really cared for me and my situation, and wanted me to settle down with a steady job that paid good living. He offered me to manage the valet parking and shuttle bus service which required me to oversee 6 to 7 people. Even though the job offer was very good to me, I was very hesitant to accept it at first since I didn't have any experience managing people. However, Mr. Chon encouraged me and told me I will be very good. He believed in me which meant a lot to me. Therefore, I accepted the job and I am still working for the same position 14 years later.

Dear Judge. Over the years, I have seen how Mr. Chon treats his employees and people. He really cares for people in a deep way. I have seen him offer life changing opportunities to



many people, including to myself. In TV, I see people not go to jail even after killing people. Mr. Chon didn't kill anybody and he deserves your mercy. Please Judge, give Mr. Chon a chance. He is deserving and he has always gave chances to others. Thank you.

June Ho Lee

July 27, 2023

REDACTED



Hon. LeShann DeArcy Hall  
U.S. District Judge  
Eastern District of New York  
225 Cadman Plaza East  
Brooklyn, NY 11201

존경하는 판사님께,

오늘 이 편지를 쓰는 것은 전회장님 대해 말씀드리기 위해서입니다. 그가 어떤 일을 저질렀든, 그의 용서를 구합니다. 저는 그의 사원으로 14년 이상 일해왔으며, 그는 매우 좋은 회장님이며 직원들을 아끼시는 분입니다. 다른 사람들을 어떻게 대하는지로 사람을 평가할 수 있습니다. 전회장님은 항상 저와 저의 직원들을 배려하고 존중해왔습니다. 2007년부터 전회장님과 함께 일하기 시작했으며, 코로나-19로 인한 짧은 휴가 기간을 제외하고 Spa Castle의 주차 및 교통 서비스를 관리하는 팀 리더로 일하고 있습니다.

저는 1995년 여름에 미국에 왔습니다. 돈이 별로 없었지만 클래식 음악을 공부하기 위해 미국으로 왔습니다. 미래에 대해 아무것도 몰랐었죠. 그 결과 1년도 채 지나지 않아 가족을 위해 두 곳의 직장을 다니게 되었습니다. 미국 온 후에 아침 일찍 델리에서 근무하여 오후 3시까지 집에 돌아가 아내가 저녁 7:30에 네일샵에서 퇴근할때까지 딸 둘을 학교에서 데리고와서 돌보았습니다. 그 후에는 택시 기사로 8시부터 새벽 3시까지 일했습니다. 이 기간 동안 하루에 평균 3~4시간 밖에 자지 못해 저의인생의 가장 어려운 시기중에 하나였습니다.

전회장님을 알게 된 계기는 야간 택시 기사로 일하던 때였습니다. 한국에서는 많은 사람들이 식사를 같이 하면서 서로 알아갑니다. 1990년대에는 야간 택시를 운전하면 꽤 괜찮은 돈을 벌 수 있었습니다. 왜냐하면 많은 한국인들이 저녁식사를 술과 곁들이며, 그이후에 집으로 혼자서 운전할수 없기 때문입니다. 전회장님은 제가 일하던 택시 회사의 정기 고객이 되어 자주 회장님을 집으로 모셔드리며, 친한 사이가 되었습니다. 아마도 운명일지도 모르겠지만, 어느 밤 전회장님을 집으로 모셔주던 도중 교통사고가 났고, 그로 인해 총 1만 5천 달러의 손해가 발생했습니다. 그럼에도 불구하고 전회장님은 바로 저를 용서해주셨습니다. 저는 참 훌륭한 사람을 만나서 감사한마음이 컸습니다.

앞서 언급한 대로, 전회장님이 회식후에 자주 택시 서비스를 전화해서 제가 오기를 투탁해서 자주 회장님댁으로 모시게되었습니다. 2007년 1월에, 회장님에게 저의 어려운 직장생활 대해 이야기하던 중에 전회장님은 자신의 회사에 일자리를 제안했습니다. 그는 저와 제 상황을 진심으로 걱정하시며, 안정된 일자리를 가지고 좋은 생활을 꾀하도록 도와주고 싶어 했습니다. 그는 저에게 주차원 및 셔틀 버스 서비스를 관리하는 일을 제안했으며, 이 자리에선 6~7명의 직원을 돌볼 필요가있었습니다. 이 일자리 제안은 제게 매우 좋았지만, 처음에는 직원들을 관리해본 경험이 없어서 망설였습니다. 그러나 전회장님은 저를 격려하며 저는 아주 잘할 것이라고 말해주었습니다. 그는 저를

믿어주었기때문에 그제안이 제게 많은 의미가 있었습니다. 그래서 저는 그 일자리를 받아들이게 되었고, 지금까지도 14 년 동안 같은 포지션으로 일하고 있습니다.

판사님께. 이렇게 오랜시간 동안 전회장님이 직원들과 많은 사람들을 어떻게 대하는지를 목격해왔습니다. 그는 정말로 사람들을 깊이 아끼는 분입니다. 그는 많은 사람들에게 인생을 바꿀 수 있는 기회를 제공했으며, 제 자신을 포함하여 많은 사람들에게 도움을 주었습니다. 저는 TV 에서 살인자들도 감옥에 가지 않는 사람들을 봤습니다. 전회장님은 아무도 죽이지도 않았으며, 그는 당신의 자비를 받을 가치가 있습니다. 판사님, 전회장님에게 기회를 주십시오. 그는 누구에게나, 어떤상황에서도, 많은 기회를 주었으며, 전회장님도 지금 기회 받을 자격이 있습니다. 감사합니다.

이준호 드림

*June Ho Lee*

July 27, 2023

REDACTED